



COMMISSION ON INSURANCE

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Scott J. Svonkin
Chairperson

Daniel Falcon
Vice-Chairperson

Barry R. Binder
William K. Callagy
Michael G. Cheung
Rickey Ivie
Don Lee
Curren D. Price, Jr.
Rose Reets
Patricia Torres

MINUTES

Meeting of January 22, 2004
830 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Commissioners Present: Michael Cheung, Dan Falcon, Rickie Ivie, Don Lee, Curren Price, Scott Svonkin

Commissioners Absent: Barry Binder, William Callagy, Rose Reets, Patricia Torres

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Svonkin called the Committee of the Whole to order at 10:09 a.m.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairperson Svonkin reported that the Board of Supervisors:

- Approved the Commission's recommendations to send letters of support for H.R. 1210 (Waxman) to the President of the United States and the appropriate congressional officials.
- Authorized the Commission to cosponsor three community information fairs, with Bet Tzedek, to inform the public of the deadline to submit Holocaust era insurance claims and the claims' filing process.

(Commissioner Price joined the meeting.)

DISCUSSION OF INSURANCE CLAIMS COMPENSATION TO SURVIVING FAMILIES OF HOLOCAUST VICTIMS

Si Frumkin described problems and inequities with the processing and distribution of Holocaust era insurance claims by the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC). Issues discussed included allocating a disproportionate amount of funds for ICHEIC's operational costs and to Jewish organizations rather than for victims' families; and insurance companies' failure to disclose names of policyholders.

John Gordon outlined steps to persuade ICHEIC and the insurance industry to expedite claims processing, and emphasized the aging survivors' need for the claims' funds.

Terri Smooke described the creation, composition and policies of ICHEIC, emphasizing

the organization is not accountable for processing the claims. She suggested individuals and organizations write letters to ICHEIC members and legislators. Following discussion, the Commission requested staff provide a roster of ICHEIC member companies and their subsidiaries.

(Commissioner Ivie joined the meeting, constituting a quorum).

Clara Firestone commented on the Jewish community's involvement in this issue. She recommended the deadline for filing claims be extended and publishing lists of Holocaust era companies and their subsidiaries.

Garrett Meishkoff spoke on his involvement in restitution issues.

Commissioners discussed involving other communities of conscience in discussions on these issues.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 9, 2003 AND OCTOBER 14, 2003

On motion of Commissioner Lee, seconded by Commissioner Ivie, the Commission unanimously approved the October 9 and October 14, 2003 minutes.

MATTERS NOT ON POSTED AGENDA (To be placed on the agenda for discussion at a future meeting)

Commissioners requested agendaizing a discussion to host a restitution issues public forum.

COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE UPDATES AND PLANNING

This item was continued to the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Firestone spoke on expanding the issue of the processing of the Holocaust era claims to a discussion on the general operations of insurance companies including whether they are paying valid claims.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Klara Firestone, Second Generation Los Angeles
Si Frumkin, Southern California Council for Soviet Jews
John Gordon, Child Survivors of the Holocaust
Eddie Martinez, State Farm Insurance
Garrett Meishkoff, Holocaust survivor
Terri Smooke, State Holocaust Commission
Martha Littlefield, Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Ken Wales, Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Steve Erickson, Executive Office, Board of Supervisors